



# National Weather Service Tallahassee, Florida



In this update:

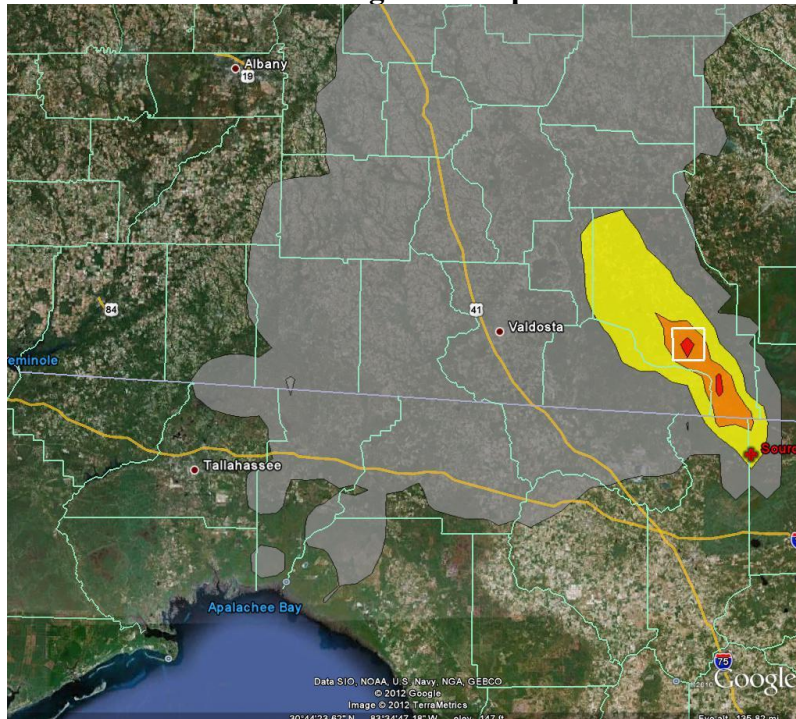
Smoke from a large wildfire near the Baker-Columbia County line in north Florida will continue to impact the region through this weekend

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## Key Points for this event:

For today, the main impact of this smoke will be air quality. Although the smoke will disperse (or "thin out") with the heating of the day, there may still be enough residual smoke to adversely affect those with respiratory illnesses. This threat will increase late tonight as the smoke thickens, as will the chance for low visibility.

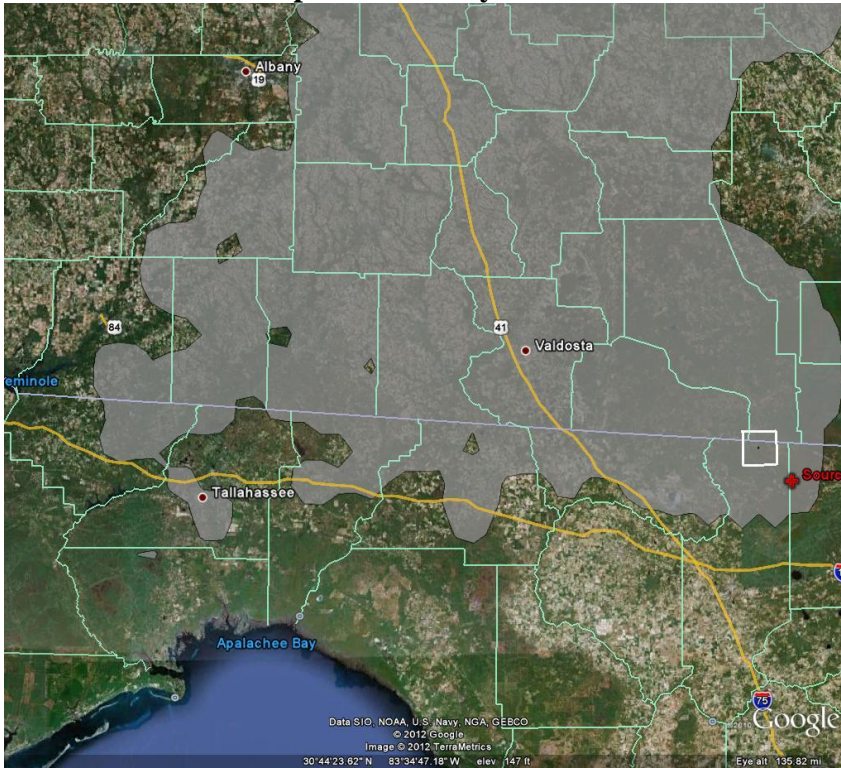
**This morning's smoke plume**



**The current weather picture:**

The image on the left is a model simulation of this morning's smoke plume emanating from a 25-thousand acre wildfire near the Baker- Columbia County line in north Florida. Low-level east winds will continue into Saturday, though subtle variations in this wind will affect the smoke plume. So far the highest smoke concentration has been east of Valdosta, GA.

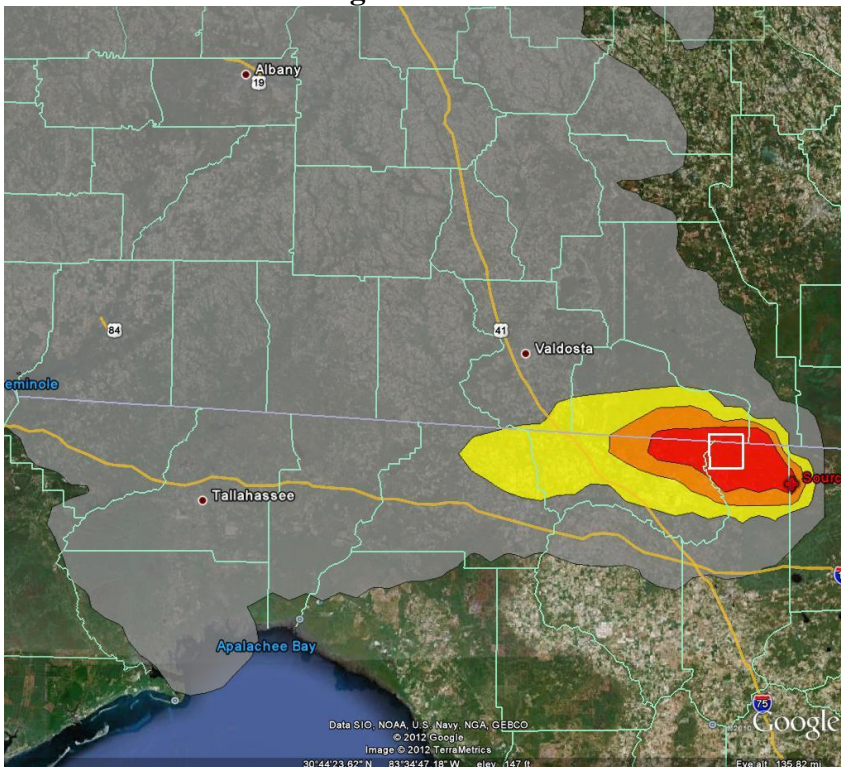
## Smoke forecast for 3 pm EDT today:



## Smoke Forecast

The following images are forecasts generated from a sophisticated computer model designed to compute the concentration of smoke particles as they are affected by the local weather (winds, instability, temperature, etc.). The brighter colors (yellow and orange) indicate the forecast highest concentration of smoke, and therefore the lowest visibility and poorest air quality. The gray areas show where the smoke is much less concentrated. It can still be detected in these areas, but does not significantly impact visibility. Note how the smoke concentration (poor visibility & air quality) is expected to increase dramatically late tonight around Madison, Valdosta, Lakeland, Moultrie, and Adel.

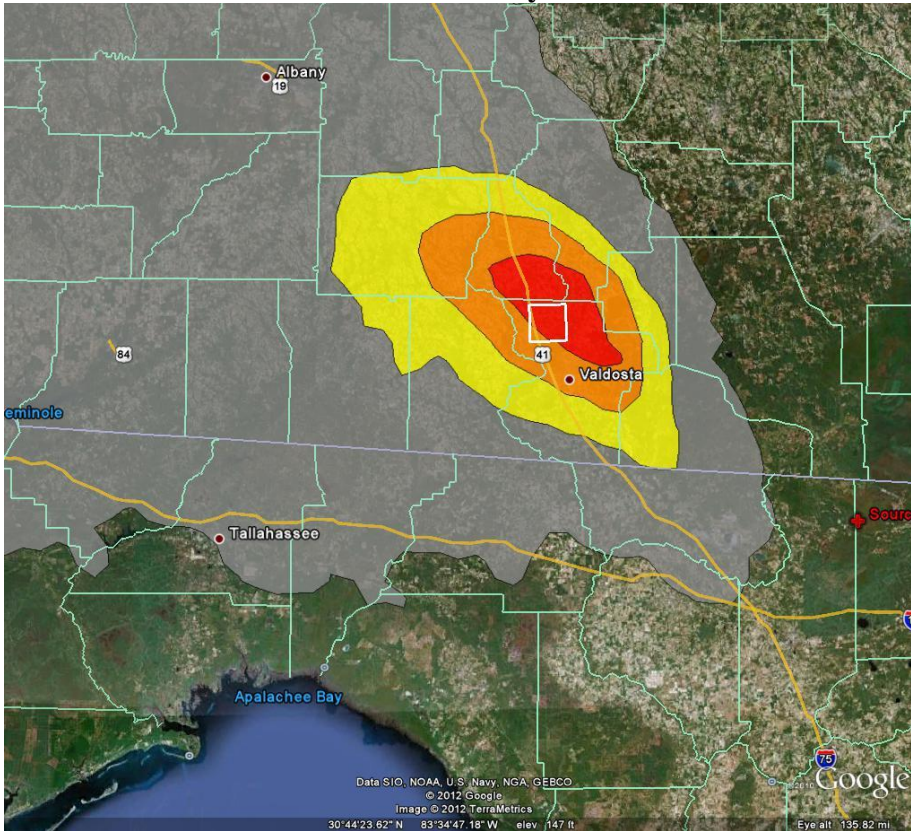
## Smoke forecast for midnight EDT:



These images should not be taken too literally, as the location and timing of this smoke plume can be off by several miles and/or hours. They are meant to give a general idea of what the smoke will be doing over the next 24 hours.



**Smoke forecast for 4 am EDT Saturday:**



Travel along I-75 in North Florida and South Georgia may become hazardous overnight. Although the model output doesn't go beyond Saturday morning, it is reasonable to assume that smoke will continue to impact portions of South Georgia and/or the Florida Big Bend through Sunday morning. By Sunday afternoon the wind may become more southerly, keeping the smoke from this fire east of our region. Unfortunately, it's possible that other, smaller wildfires elsewhere could still impact our area.

## Impacts

- The most widespread impact will be a reduction in air quality. Even relatively low concentrations of smoke could adversely affect those with respiratory illnesses. The visibility will be the other main impact, though low visibilities will be more localized and won't materialize until later tonight. Our main concern as far as travel is concerned is along I-75 tonight in North Florida and South Georgia, where the visibility could drop below one mile suddenly, posing a major risk to motorists. In January of this year there were several fatalities and injuries on I-75 near Gainesville, Florida, where smoke from a nearby fire played a key role.

**Summary:**

- Areas of smoke will linger across the Florida Big Bend and South Georgia today and tonight, and may persist across portions of the region through the weekend as well.
- The most widespread impact will be a reduction in air quality, but localized areas of low visibility will become a problem later tonight, with the lowest visibility likely along I-75.

The National Weather Service in Tallahassee will continue to monitor this situation. If you have any questions, please give our office a call at 850-942-8833 or on our toll free line at 800-598-4562 and ask to speak to a meteorologist. We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also reach us on our Southern Linc phone at 1\*77\*184.